



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Counterterrorism Division
FBI Headquarters
October 1, 2004

COLD SUN
MAJOR CASE 205
Animal Rights Extremism/Eco-Terrorism
Terrorism Enterprise Investigation

I. PREDICATION:

THIS TERRORISM ENTERPRISE INVESTIGATION (TEI) WAS INITIATED BECAUSE THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES SET FORTH HEREIN REASONABLY INDICATE THAT TWO OR MORE PERSONS ARE ENGAGED IN AN ENTERPRISE FOR THE PURPOSE OF FURTHERING SOCIAL OR POLITICAL GOALS WHOLLY OR IN PART THROUGH ACTIVITIES THAT INVOLVE FORCE OR VIOLENCE, AND VIOLATIONS OF FEDERAL CRIMINAL LAWS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION II, SUBSECTION J OF THIS DOCUMENT.



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Outside the Scope

EARTH LIBERATION FRONT (ELF):

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) is [redacted] a term often used to denote a substantive criminal group or organization, the stated goal of which is to end the destruction of the natural environment and the exploitation of Earth's natural resources. Frequent use of the acronym "ELF," including by the news media and law enforcement agencies, has contributed to a widely-held belief that the ELF is an actual group or organization.

[redacted] the extremist environmental movement advocates the use of "direct action" (i.e., criminal activity) against targets identified by those within the movement as contributing to the destruction/exploitation of the Earth and its resources.

[redacted] **ELF**

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[redacted] Over one thousand offenses, including acts claimed by the ELF, as well as acts similar in methodology and targeting to those claimed by [redacted] ELF, have occurred in the United States in the past ten years. Estimates of damage and destruction resulting from these acts, as compiled by the FBI and by national organizations such as the Fur Commission and the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR), put total economic losses in excess of 115 million dollars.

On 10/01/2003, the Counterterrorism Division, FBI Headquarters, initiated this Terrorism Enterprise Investigation into

the [redacted] ELF. This TEI was renewed by the Counterterrorism Division on 10/01/2004.

Investigation has identified suspects in some animal rights and environmental extremism-related criminal cases who are founders or members of, or otherwise associated with, single-interest groups which espouse extremist philosophies similar to those promulgated on [redacted] ELF websites. Based on information developed both through the previously closed Portland Division Terrorism Enterprise Investigation FOXFIRE, and through other criminal investigations across the US, the Counterterrorism Division asserts that numerous persons involved in the commission of animal rights and environmental extremism-related crimes in the US likely are affiliated in some way with one or more such "above ground" single-interest groups.

The acronyms [redacted] and "ELF" are, for all practical purposes, synonymous with the extremist animal rights and environmental movements, respectively. Both movements advocate and employ the use of force and violence against persons and property as a means of effecting social and political change.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ELF

Acts of "eco-terrorism" have been committed within the United States since at least 1977, when disaffected members of the ecological preservation group Greenpeace formed the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and began targeting commercial fishing operations by cutting drift nets. Eco-terrorism can generally be defined as the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally-oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or to reach an intended audience beyond the target, which itself is often of a symbolic nature.

In 1980, disaffected environmentalists in the United States formed a radical group called Earth First! and began a campaign of protests and civil disobedience. In 1984, Earth First! members introduced "tree spiking" as a tactic to thwart logging. Tree spiking is the act of pounding large metal spikes into trees designated to be cut down. When loggers subsequently try to cut down spiked trees with chainsaws, the chains get caught in the spikes, break, and can cause serious injury to loggers, as well as disrupt tree cutting operations (a recent example of an ELF-claimed tree-spiking occurred in March 2002, near Erie, Pennsylvania, when metal nails were found in trees designated to be cut down as part of a highway construction project).

In 1992, the ELF was founded in Brighton, England by Earth First! members who refused to abandon criminal acts as a tactic when others wished to mainstream Earth First!

In 1993, ELF was listed for the first time together with ALF in a communique declaring solidarity in actions between the two movements. Speeches given by then-ALF national spokespersons

at the 1998 National Animal Rights conference held at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, promoted unity between the movements.

In 1994, the founders of the San Francisco branch of Earth First! published in *The Earth First! Journal* a recommendation that Earth First! mainstream itself in the United States, leaving criminal acts other than unlawful protests to ELF. This same tactic was adopted by those animal rights groups presumed to be involved in criminal activity utilizing the ALF/ELF or Anarchist claims of responsibility.

Prior to establishment of an ELF website in January 2001, information concerning ELF was posted on the ALF website. Credit has been claimed jointly on behalf of ALF and ELF for several raids, including a June 1998 arson attack of a United States Department of Agriculture Animal Damage Control building near Olympia, Washington, where damages exceeded two million dollars. More recently, in December 2002, ALF and ELF jointly claimed responsibility for an arson targeting a fur farm in Harborcreek, PA.

In October 1998, credit was claimed on behalf of ELF for the arson of a Vail, Colorado, ski facility in which four ski lifts, a restaurant, a picnic facility and a utility building were destroyed, resulting in damages in excess of twelve million dollars. In December 1998, ELF claimed responsibility for an arson fire at the U.S. Forest Industries office in Medford, Oregon, which resulted in damages exceeding five hundred thousand dollars. Most recently, on August 1, 2003, a huge fire at a La Jolla, California condominium complex that was under construction destroyed the entire 200 unit complex and was claimed on behalf of the ELF by a banner left at the scene by the arsonist(s). The estimated damages from this arson ranged up to \$50 million, making it the single most damaging act of eco-terrorism ever in the United States.

A. Recent cases and events across the nation.

Activities During The Last Year:

[Redacted]

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Arson of Townhomes Under Construction

On 10/06/2003, a fire was reported at a townhome development under construction in Attelboro, Massachusetts. The cause of the fire was determined to be arson, and the arson is attributed to the ELF due to ELF graffiti being left at the construction site repeatedly between May and September 2003. The most recent graffiti left at the site prior to the arson read, "ELF, sprawl, no industry, we'll be back." Damages were estimated at \$750,000.

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Arson of SUVs, Richmond, Virginia

On 01/19/2004, a number of Molotov cocktails were placed near new trucks and SUVs at the Richmond Ford dealership in Richmond,

Virginia. A total of 4 devices were found at the scene, made from "SoBe" brand drink bottles. Three were lit, of which two failed to ignite. One device ignited and scorched the vehicle under which it was placed. A 5-gallon gas can and scorched newspapers were found in the back of another truck. Green spray paint was used to paint graffiti on the wall of the dealership which read "XELFX", a reference to both the ELF and Straight Edgers. A BMW automobile at the dealership was also spray painted with "XXX", another Straight Edge reference. Richmond Division eventually identified and charged [REDACTED] with this arson and another attempted arson at a nearby dealership.

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Arson of Lumber Yard, West Jordan, Utah

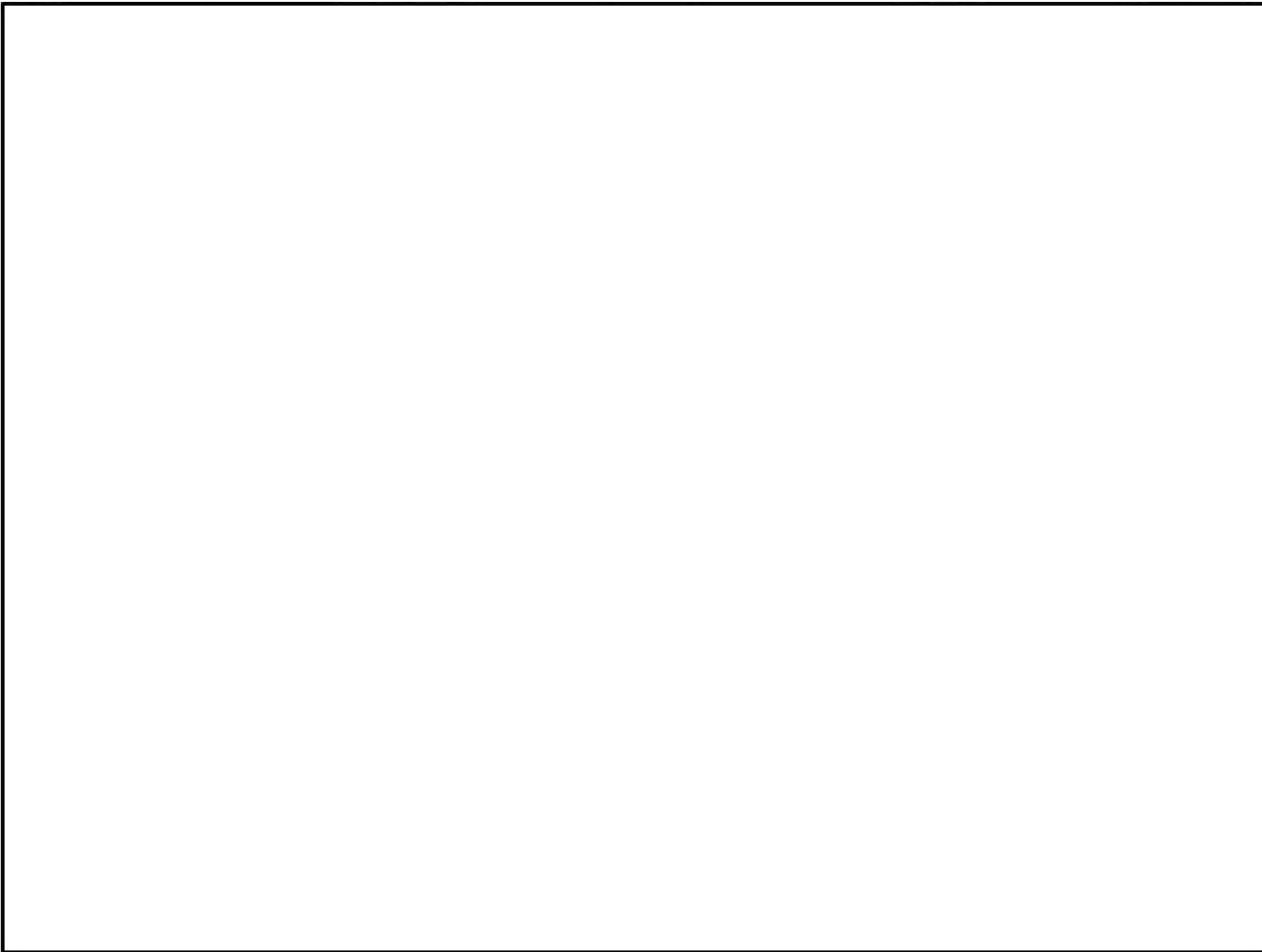
[REDACTED]

At approximately 1:40 am on 14 June 2004 the Stock Building Supply lumber yard in West Jordan, Utah, was set on fire by an arsonist(s) who accessed the yard by cutting through a chain link fence. A building structure, approximately eight forklifts, 4-5 trucks, and a large amount of lumber was destroyed, resulting in an estimated loss of \$1.5 million. "ELF" was spray painted on a garage door, block wall, and the door of a work truck at the scene. On 15 June 2004 an unknown individual faxed a claim of responsibility to KSL Radio in Salt Lake City on behalf of the ELF. The claim, stated that Stock Building Supply was "targeted because it has ignored several warnings to repair their forklifts. The forklifts in which they operate every day put out far more pollutants than average diesel engines." The communiqué also listed four businesses as "targets to follow immediately in the Salt Lake area."

[REDACTED]

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Vandalism of U.S. Forest Service vehicles, Flagstaff, Arizona

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On 07/12/2004, twenty Forest Service vehicles assigned to the Tongass National Forest were vandalized, and ELF graffiti was left as a claim of responsibility. The Forest Service vehicles each had at least two of the tires punctured. The punctures in the tires were similar, with most having two small slash marks in the side of the tires. Some of the vehicles tires apparently went flat immediately, while others were slowly leaking air. In addition to the vandalism to the tires, at least three of the vehicles had messages scratched into the paint. One of the messages referenced "ELF", and said something to the effect of "USF get out of Tongass now".



ELF literature available through the ELF website (www.earthliberationfront.com), which was established on 01/12/2001, defines the Earth Liberation Front as being an international underground organization consisting of autonomous groups of people who carry out direct actions according to the ELF guidelines. This literature states: "The ELF operates in groups called cells that may consist of one to many individuals working together. Each cell is autonomous not only to the public but also to one another. This secure structure helps to keep activists out of jail and free to continue conducting actions." ELF guidelines described in this literature are as follows:

-To inflict economic damage to those who profit from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment.

-To reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the environment and all the species that cohabit in it.

-To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and non-human.

In or about June 2001, a publication entitled "Frequently Asked Questions About the Earth Liberation Front (ELF)," which contains

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information concerning the history, philosophy, and guidelines for direct action espoused by ELF, became publicly available [redacted]

A foreword to the publication reads as follows: "Using real direct action in the form of economic sabotage, the ELF is targeting what the greedy entities care about, their pocketbooks. By inflicting as much economic damage as possible, the ELF can allow a given entity to decide it is in their best economic interests to stop destroying life for the sake of profit."

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This investigation will serve as a repository for information collected by field investigations of individuals and groups which are implicated in the planning or commission of criminal activity.

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J. Violations:

Investigations conducted to date have identified numerous violations of federal criminal law committed on behalf of ELF, to include:

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1961, Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO).

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1952, Interstate Transportation in Aid of Racketeering (ITAR).

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1361,

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Theft of Government Property.

Title 18, United States Code, Section 43,
Animal Enterprise Terrorism.

Title 18, United States Code, Section 373, Conspiracy to
Solicit a Crime of Violence.

Title 47, United States Code, Section 223, Interstate
Harassing Communications.

The Counterterrorism Division is aware that the majority of animal welfare and environmental activists in the United States are not engaged in criminal activity, and that most animal welfare and environmental groups operate within the law. Therefore, investigation will continue to focus only on those groups and individuals directly involved in or actively aiding and abetting criminal activity.